



A Step Forward for Charity Surgical Mission: Combination with Music Consolation and Education for Children with Deformities to Promote the Care for the Disadvantaged Group

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Letter to the Editor

Nowadays the most striking and widely accepted concepts emerging in the world are environmental protection and charity. Comparing with last century, today people on the earth are more closely related and no one can live without being affected by other parts of the world. Sharing the responsibility to maintain a clear global environment and helping the poor people to survive better have become very important issues now [1-3].

Charity surgery mission has been practiced since decades ago. It aims to provide surgical procedures to help the poor victims in the third world countries, notably the cleft lip and palate, hand deformities and other procedures which do not need complex postoperative care have been practiced in the past years.

Recently we have developed a new approach to help the handicapped [1]. A more effective plan to improve the postoperative care by training the doctors in the target country, so that they can give continuous postoperative care including physiotherapy and minor revision surgeries after the surgical team leaves [2]. Because of this a more complex surgery can be done by the surgical team to achieve better results, such as microsurgical reconstruction [3]. On the other hand other associated activities such as a concert can be held to provide consolation for these sick children, as well as offering a master class by a famous pianist from US (Weiyin Chen) for young children leaning piano in the nearby towns. We might not be able to cure completely the deformities with a single operation, but the patients' soul and psychological problems start to be addressed. Of course they might need subsequent revision surgeries, which can be done by the trained local doctor or our surgical team in the next visits.

Under the arrangement by Give-me-Five Charity Organization, our charity trip to a village nearby Aurangabad in India had been planned many years ago. A plastic surgeon in India was trained by our hospital for one year regarding advanced reconstructive microsurgery. In the 4 days of our charity mission we operated for 42 children with hand contractures due to burn injury, as well as 2 cases of extremity lymph edema using reconstructive micro surgery. At the end of the program a concert was held for these children, and they were cheered up so much that we were moved. The trip was characterized by the following features: (1) more advanced surgery such as microsurgery could be done when a trained local doctor could take continuous care after surgery. (2) Better results with physiotherapy by the local hospital could be expected. (3) It was a combination of charity surgery and music. Surgery is for healing of body and music is for healing of soul. It highlights the concern for mental health of the young patients, not just physical health. It appeals to the attention to them for consolation of their mind with encouragement for positive thinking in the future. This is a good start of more considerate surgical mission, which can be further improved in the future.

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